



Playscape at Ripley

Appendix

F

Concord's ADA Self-Evaluation Information for Handicap Accessibility

The three parts of the required, self-evaluation provide an outline of how accessible the Town's conservation and recreation properties and programs are to people with disabilities. Conservation and recreation facilities were evaluated using the Facility Inventory form provided in the Open Space and Recreation Planner's Workbook. Shortcomings are identified, and the importance of making comfortable and safe properties, trails, and programs for handicapped residents and visitors is highlighted.

A) Administrative Requirements

See attached documentation regarding the designation of an ADA Coordinator, the Town of Concord's grievance procedures, and public notification requirements at the end of this section.

B) Program Accessibility

The information set forth below provides an inventory and transition plan, as needed, for the buildings, recreation facilities and equipment, programs and services under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission (Natural Resources Commission) or Recreation Department. This information has been prepared and reviewed with the assistance of the Town's ADA Coordinator, Assistant Natural Resources Director, Recreation Department Directors, and Harry Beyer and Murray Nicolson (members of the Trails Committee who either have, or work with,

people with mobility impairments). For the 2004 OSRP, Lois Sanford Gallo, a former resident of Concord with a mobility impairment, traveled in her motorized scooter over most of the trails and sites discussed herein. Facilities were evaluated based upon the facility inventory form provided in the Open Space and Recreation Planner's Workbook provided by the State.

People with disabilities have access to a wide range of recreational opportunities in Concord. The recreational resources inventoried are: (a) recreational buildings including the Hunt Memorial Gymnasium, Beede Swim and Fitness Center, Harvey Wheeler Community Center, and 105 Everett Street; (b) recreational field areas including Emerson Field, Rideout Playground, Cousins Field, and South Meadow Playground; and (c) conservation lands. With few exceptions, this inventory does not discuss private recreation facilities (e.g., day care centers, Fenn School, Nashoba Brooks School, Concord Academy and Middlesex School) or various state and federal lands, which together enrich the recreational opportunities in Town.

Indoor Recreational Facilities, Equipment, Services, and Programs

In August 1994, the Town completed an ADA compliance survey and report for all municipal buildings. This survey and report included the Hunt Me-

morial Gymnasium in Concord Center, which is handicap-accessibility compliant and houses the Town's Recreation Department. The Hunt Gym is the center for many of the Town's indoor recreational programs and services. The Harvey Wheeler Center in West Concord is another center for indoor recreation which was evaluated, and with its renovation completed in 2004, is also handicap-accessible compliant.

Concord's recreation programs have long been, and continue to be known for, their inclusion of participants of all abilities. In 1980, the Recreation Department initiated an inclusive Summer Day Camp for children of all abilities, which continues to the present. This program uses the Hunt Recreation Center and adjacent Emerson Field, which are both considered to be handicap accessible. The Concord Little League baseball, Concord Youth Baseball, and Concord-Carlisle Youth Soccer programs are also well known locally for their inclusiveness of participants of all abilities.

In 2005 and 2006 the Town hired a consultant to undertake a comprehensive assessment of Town properties, as well as policies and procedures, to determine compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board.

In 2006, the Beede Swim and Fitness Center, an indoor community pool and gym located on the Concord-Carlisle High School land was completed. This facility was designed and planned for handicap accessibility compliance.

Self-Evaluation of Buildings:

Hunt Recreation Center:

- *Parking:* Parking provided at the Hunt Recreation Center complies with ADA regulations, providing one handicap (HC) parking spaces for the 16-space parking lot. Street parking is also available. There are no ramps, however, the site access, path of travel, and entrances meet ADA requirements. The sign at the non-accessible entrance indicating direction to an accessible entrance was in disrepair, but was corrected in Spring 2013.
- *Building:* All stairs, doors, sinks, toilets, floors, drinking fountains, signs, and switches were evaluated. The only aspect found to be in non-compliance with ADA requirements was the

height of the coat hook in the bathroom stall which was 63 inches high as opposed to the 54 inch height requirement.

- *Tables:* Tables meet ADA requirements.
- *Transition Plan:* Lower coat hook in the bathroom stall to 54 inches in height.

Beede Swim and Fitness Center:

Since the 2004 OSRP, the Town has constructed an indoor swimming facility and fitness center which was constructed in accordance with ADA requirements.

- *Parking:* Six HC spaces are provided for the 120-space parking lot. A van space is not provided, however a drop-off space is provided at the front entrance. The entrance is at ground level and does not contain ramps. Site access, path of travel, and entrances meet ADA requirements.
- *Building:* The building was constructed in accordance with ADA requirements.
- *Swimming Pool/Showers:* The facility contains four swimming pools. An ADA compliant lift is provided to assist with access to the pool. Showers meet all ADA requirements.
- *Tables:* Tables meet ADA requirements.

Ripley Gym:

Though the Ripley Gym does not fall under the auspices of the Recreation Department, the facility is used to accommodate some Recreation programs and therefore was evaluated for the plan.

- *Parking:* Parking provided at the Ripley Gym complies with ADA requirements, offering four HC spaces in the 60-space parking lot. There are no ramps; however the site access, path of travel, and entrances meet ADA requirements. There are minor ponding areas within the parking lot during heavy rain events.
- *Building:* Entrances to the building, doors, and associated signage are accessible. There is a 1.5-inch interior threshold which should be modified to provide better accessibility. The restrooms meet ADA requirements except that a coat hook was not provided within at least one stall.
- *Transition Plan:* Modify at least one bathroom stall to contain a coat hook 54 inches in height. Reduce the interior threshold to 0.5-inch maximum.

Harvey Wheeler Community Center:

Some recreational programs are held in this facility and therefore was evaluated as part of this plan.

- *Parking:* Four HC parking spaces are provided for the 115-space parking lot, directly adjacent to the main entrance. Five HC spaces are required, though many of the remaining spots are readily HC accessible. Ramps are present from the parking area to the building and meet ADA requirements. Site access, path of travel, and entrances are accessible, however, there is not a sign at the non-accessible entrance identifying direction to the accessible entrance.
- *Building:* Entrances, doors, and stairs within are accessible. Restrooms are generally in compliance with ADA requirements. Items identified that require modification include providing at least one bathroom stall where the door swings out, is self-closing, and contains a pull latch. Floors, signs, and drinking fountains are accessible.
- *Transition Plan:* Create one additional parking space. Modify at least one bathroom stall to contain a door that swings out, is self-closing, and contains a pull latch.

105 Everett Studios:

This facility is owned by Middlesex County; however, this building is utilized for some of the programs provided by the Recreation Department. The upstairs offices are not for public use and are not accessible.

- *Parking:* There are no designated parking spaces. Building users park on the street. A ramp is provided at the facility. One parameter was noted as needing modification: handrails do not extend 12-inches beyond the top and bottom of the ramp. Site access was found to require modifications as the surface is not evenly paved or hard packed and ponding of areas occurs. The path of travel was not found to be stable, firm, or slip resistant and the slope exceeds the maximum thresholds.
- *Building:* The entrance is accessible but does require modification to bring the building into compliance with ADA standards. The primary entrance, though accessible, does not possess the required signage. The door handles do not meet height requirements and are not operable with a closed fist. Additionally, the emergency egress alarm is audible only and does not include flashing lights. The stairs, doors, floors, and restrooms require slight modifications to bring them into compliance.
- *Transition Plan:* The Town should work with

Middlesex County to improve access to the building by extending the handrails on the ramp, pave or regrade the exterior path of travel, reinstall the front entrance handle at the appropriate height, provide the appropriate signage and emergency egress alarms, and adjust the front door to provide the appropriate closing speed.

The Town's outdoor recreational programs and activities take place on playgrounds, outdoor courts and playing fields, which are listed below along with conservation lands and trails.

Playgrounds

Nine playgrounds for children are maintained on public land and at least eight are considered to be handicap accessible. The Harvey Wheeler Center also serves West Concord, and its playground and adjacent land are handicap accessible compliant. Rideout Playground and Emerson Field serve West Concord and Concord Center respectively. Additional athletic fields are located on public school grounds at Alcott, Thoreau, Willard, Sanborn and Peabody schools and the Concord-Carlisle Regional High School.

Though not under the purview of the Recreation Department or the Natural Resources Commission, a new facility known as the Playscape at Ripley, a nature park for all ages and abilities, is under construction. Phase I of the Playscape at Ripley creates an accessible area for play and an accessible woodland path leading to the trailhead for Gowing's Swamp. The long-term vision for the Playscape at Ripley integrates the area currently used for the Concord Children's Center playground with the new, accessible, natural playscape features. Target completion date is 2015.

Self-Evaluation of Playgrounds:

Harvey Wheeler Center:

Located at 1276 Main Street, the Harvey Wheeler Playground contains an ADA compliant path to a sand box. See Harvey Wheeler Community Center above for information on parking and restrooms.

Rideout Playground:

Located on Laws Brook Road, Rideout Playground contains three tennis courts, a 90-foot baseball field, two 60-foot baseball fields, and a handicap playground.

- *Parking:* The parking lot meets all ADA requirements and provides two handicap spaces for the 22-space parking lot. The path from the parking lot to the playground was repaved in the summer of 2013 to meet ADA requirements. There are no ramps; however, the site access and path of travel meet ADA requirements.
- *Bathrooms:* The restroom was found to be in general compliance with ADA requirements. Two items were found to need modifications: the coat hook was 60 inches high instead of 54 inches; and a back wall grab bar is needed.
- *Drinking Fountains/Picnic Area:* The drinking fountain and picnic tables meet ADA requirements.
- *Transition Plan:* Reset the coat hook in the bathroom to 54 inches and install a back wall grab bar.

Emerson Playground:

Emerson Playground is in compliance with ADA regulations, having constructed an accessible path in 2009 from the parking area to the playground which contains handicap accessible equipment. For parking and facility assessment, see Emerson Field below.

Cousins Field:

Cousins Field is an informal playing field located at the end of Brown Street. There is no formal parking area, only street parking. The property is level and there is a hard packed gravel path into the field area. There are no buildings or equipment on site. There is a short trail down to the Assabet River. The grades are extremely steep and are not accessible.

South Meadow Playground:

Located on Pilgrim Road, this playground has an informal parking area. There is no formal marking of parking spaces or proper signage, however, the parking area offers accessibility. There is a drop-off area provided within 100 feet of the entrance that has adequate room to accommodate HC vans. The surface is hard packed gravel with a slope less than 5%. The site access and path of travel meet all other parameters identified. There are no buildings or other equipment on site.

Outdoor Courts, etc.

Basketball, swimming pool, and tennis facilities are all considered to be handicap accessible. The outdoor pool is at Emerson Field, and the tennis courts are located at Rideout and Emerson. Basketball courts are located at Rideout, Emerson, Alcott, Thoreau, Willard, Sanborn, Peabody and Ripley. The Concord-Carlisle High School grounds are presently being reconstructed and fields will be ADA compliant, including a one-half mile ADA walking path around the fields.

Playing Fields

Ten Town playing field areas, primarily designed for soccer/lacrosse and baseball, but also used for diverse outdoor recreation including football and track, are on municipal and school land. At least seven are considered to be handicap accessible: Rideout and Emerson Fields include programs and league play, while Alcott, Thoreau, Willard, Sanborn, and Peabody are on public school land. In addition, Cousins Field serves as an informal playing field.

Self-Evaluation of Playing Fields:

Emerson Field:

Containing a multi-use field, two 60-foot baseball/softball fields, a playground, a ¼ mile track, five tennis courts, a 90-foot baseball field, two basketball courts, and a swimming pool, Emerson Field is ADA compliant.

- *Parking:* Parking is the same as that provided for the Hunt Recreation Center which complies with ADA regulations. One HC parking spaces is provided near the Hunt Recreation Center. An additional HC space is provided on the opposite side of the field (near tennis courts). Street parking is also available. There are no ramps, however, the site access, path of travel, and entrances meet ADA requirements. The sign at the non-accessible entrance indicating direction to accessible entrance was in disrepair but was corrected in Spring 2013.
- *Facilities:* Being a level field with adequate paths of travel, the facility meets ADA requirements. From discussions with the MA Architectural Access Board it was determined

that the only deficiency in was an ADA compliant path to the handicap swing. This was installed in 2009. The swimming pool has stairs with 2 handrails instead of a ramp but does not contain a lifting device to meet ADA requirements. The Town's Accessibility Policy allows for the use of the Beede Center pools, which does have the required lift, to meet ADA requirements.

Conservation Lands and Trails

The Natural Resources Commission oversees approximately 1,300 acres of public conservation land including 24.5 miles of trails. Concord's conservation areas include a mosaic of different habitats including wetlands, ponds, streams, fields, and upland forests. Concord, being at the confluence of three rivers, is rich in wetlands combined with steep slopes making ADA compliance on all trail systems unachievable, though areas are always being evaluated to provide ADA compliant trails where feasible. Trails are found in all parts of Concord, providing residents and visitors alike with opportunities to walk and cycle through habitats on surfaces that range from basic woodland trails to elaborate boardwalks. Most areas provide basic unimproved parking on dirt. With the exception of those referenced below, none of the Concord conservation trails meet ADA requirements.

One parcel of Town conservation land, Chamberlin Park, is considered to be handicap accessible. Being located adjacent to the Town's municipal parking lot provides adequate HC parking and access to the site.

In 2012, the Trails Committee completed an Assessed Trail in the Town Forest. An "assessed trail" is an unpaved hiking trail that has been assessed to determine the degree of difficulty that persons with mobility impairments may have in traveling it. Trail grade, cross-slope, and trail surfaces were identified and mapped for the more robust handicapable individuals or those assisted by an able bodied person. A handicap parking area and kiosk was constructed, in 2010 and 2012 respectively, specifically for this trail. Additional trails will be assessed in the near future. Additionally, the Trail Committee will be working on assessing all Town trails for use with *Other Power*

Driven Mobility Devices.

In addition, Concord is fortunate to have the Battle Road Trail, completed by the U.S. National Park Service, which is handicap accessible, as well as the handicap accessible dike trail at the Great Meadows Wildlife Refuge, facilitating observation of wildlife. A ramp on the State Department of Conservation and Recreation land, and the provision of beach wheelchairs, help to accommodate persons with mobility impairments in the challenging terrain of Walden Pond.

One of the recommendations of the 2004 *Open Space and Recreation Plan* was to establish six new trails accessible to wheelchair users in different parts of Town (*section 7A2*): Assabet-Nashoba Trail; Town Forest Trail; Punkatasset Trail; Landfill and Brister's Hill trails; Old Mill Crossing; and Hillside Ave. in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. Of these, improvements were made to Hillside Ave. by removing chain barriers and repaving the road. Efforts were made to fund the Old Mill Crossing trail and to place a CR on the landfill to develop the Landfill and Brister's Hill Trail, but were not supported at Town Meeting. The Walden Woods Project will be assessing the Walden Woods Interpretive Site which connects to the Town Forest Assessed Trail. Efforts will continue to complete additional accessible trails. In addition to those listed in the 2004 OSRP, the Trails Committee will be working to assess the Reformatory Branch trail and the yellow trail in the Annursnac Conservation Land. The Town will also continue their partnership with the Thoreau Farm Trust to establish a trail connection from the Henry David Thoreau birth house to the Battle Road, which will be assessed but will most likely not meet ADA requirements due to the terrain.

Additionally, the Town is proceeding with the 75% design for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, a regional rail trail which will be ADA compliant.

The Division of Natural Resources will also continue the Senior Walking Program in partnership with the Council on Aging. This program identifies and maps trails that are reasonable for seniors to traverse.

In summary, not only are the Recreation Depart-

ment programs handicap accessible when viewed in their entirety, but individual programs, including facilities, equipment and services, also appear to be handicap accessible. No programs are offered by or under the jurisdiction of the conservation commission (Natural Resources Commission). Thus, no structural or other changes are required for programmatic accessibility. Buildings that house the recreation programs are in general compliance with handicap-accessibility requirements. The minor improvements noted in the transition plan will be achieved to bring facilities into compliance. Additionally, each of the six school facilities that include playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, and playing fields for school and general recreation use (not Town programs) are considered to be handicap accessible, in that most, if not all, of an area is accessible to persons with disabilities. When selecting new playground equipment, the Recreation and School Departments are reminded to choose items that can be used by children with a wide range of disabilities.

Concord has a history of being proactive in providing persons with disabilities access to the remarkable range of programs provided by the Town and other entities. This tradition continues to the present. It is recommended that efforts be furthered to increase trail accessibility, establishing more “Assessed” trails where ADA compliant trails cannot be offered.

C) Employment Practices

See attached statement regarding the Town’s compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act employment practices.

Town of Concord

APP #5
MUNICIPAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
Relating to the Americans with Disabilities Act

The following grievance Procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in employment practices and policies or the provision of services, activities, programs and benefits by the Town of Concord.

The complaint shall be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complainant and location, date and description of the problem. Reasonable accommodations, such as personal interviews or an electronic recording of the complaint, will be made available for persons with disabilities who are unable to submit a written complaint.

The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

ADA Coordinator

Douglas Meagher, Deputy Town Manager
Town House
22 Monument Square
Concord MA 01742
Phone Number: 978/318-3000

The following timeline may be extended by mutual agreement of the grievant and the ADA Coordinator or Town Manager:

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting, the ADA Coordinator will respond in writing and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant such as audio recording. The response will explain the position of the Town of Concord and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the ADA Coordinator does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her designee may appeal the decision of the ADA Coordinator within 15 calendar days after receipt of the response to the Town Manager.

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the appeal, the Town Manager will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting the Town Manager will respond in writing and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant such as audio recording, with a final resolution of the complaint.

All complaints received by the ADA Coordinator, appeals to the Town Manager and responses from the ADA Coordinator and Town Manager will be kept by the Town of Concord for at least three years.

Distribution: All Departments, Boards, Committees



OLD NORTH BRIDGE

TOWN OF CONCORD

TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE
22 MONUMENT SQUARE - P.O. BOX 535
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742

TELEPHONE (978) 318-3000
FAX (978) 318-3002

May 23, 2014

Lori Capone
Asst. Director of Natural Resources
Re: ADA Self Evaluation for Open Space & Recreation Plan

Dear Lori:

This is to attest that the Town of Concord's employment practices, including recruitment, personnel actions, leave administration, training, tests, medical exams/questionnaires, social and recreational programs, fringe benefits, collective bargaining agreements and wage and salary administration are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sincerely,

Douglas Meagher, Deputy Town Manager
Municipal ADA Coordinator



PUBLIC NOTICE

Americans With Disabilities Act Requirements

The Town of Concord advises applicants, participants and the public that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs, services and activities.

The Town of Concord has designated the following person to coordinate efforts to comply with these requirements.

Inquiries and complaints should be directed to:

ADA Coordinator

Douglas Meagher, Deputy Town Manager

Town House

22 Monument Square

Concord, MA 01742

(978)318-3000

(E-mail: Dmeagher@concordma.gov)

TOWN OF CONCORD

Americans with Disabilities Act Updated Transition Plan

In 1994 the Town of Concord retained LPBA/Architects, Inc. to complete a compliance survey and report for all municipal buildings. The report included a summary of each facility's compliance, and an estimated cost of removing specific barriers.

In 2005 and 2006 the Town of Concord contracted with Adaptive Environments, then the New England ADA Technical Resource Center and one of ten Regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, to undertake a comprehensive assessment of Town properties, as well as policies and procedures to determine compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board.

The Town of Concord continues to utilize the in-depth 2006 compliance survey as a tool for identifying and prioritizing capital expenditures related to accessibility. With respect to the pedestrian realm, Concord Public Works staff continues to move forward with identification of repairs and improvements needed to ensure sidewalk accessibility. Remediation is carried out within ongoing road/sidewalk program funding cycles.

The Town of Concord recognizes the necessity of complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act in order to properly serve all of its citizens, employees, and customers. Town staff is attuned to the requirements of ADA, and functional staff members take an active role in ensuring the Town's compliance. In addition, the Town of Concord frequently seeks and welcomes technical assistance and guidance from relevant agencies such as the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities and the Architectural Access Board.

The Town of Concord, as a matter of written policy, is an Equal Opportunity employer, and does not discriminate against those with disabilities in its employment practices or in its services.